



## MANUAL HANDLING POLICY

### Designated Contacts

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Cameo Network Services Ltd. will comply with the requirements of the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992. Where the general risk assessment indicates the possibility of risks to employees from the manual handling of loads, the following hierarchy of measures will be followed:

1. Avoiding hazardous manual handling operations so far as reasonably practicable.
2. Completing a suitable and sufficient assessment of any hazardous manual handling operation that cannot be avoided.
3. Reducing the risk from injury from those operations so far as is reasonably practicable.

'Manual Handling Operations' means any transporting or supporting of a load (including lifting, putting down, pushing, pulling, carrying or moving thereof) by hand or by bodily force, as opposed to mechanical handling by crane, lift truck etc.

'Load' includes any person and any animal. A load in this context must be a discrete moveable object.

It is the Company's aim to ensure that arrangements are in place to ensure a systematic approach to the assessment and control of risks. Manual handling accidents cause a lot of time to be lost and are probably the most common accidents. Assessments will enable management to plan, introduce and monitor measures needed to ensure compliance with health and safety legislation and to implement best practice.

Assessments will be reviewed when there is a reason to suspect they are no longer valid or where there has been a significant change in the matter to which it relates.



All significant findings of risk assessments will be recorded.

Employees will be consulted on risk assessments which affect their work and will be provided with comprehensible and relevant information on the risks to their health and safety identified by those assessments including the preventative and protective measures.

Anyone undertaking a risk assessment will be adequately trained in the risk procedure and be familiar with the activities involved in the activity being assessed. For some services/sections, presenting few or simple hazards, a suitable and sufficient risk assessment will be a very straightforward process based on judgement and requiring no specialist skills or complicated techniques.

For a few intermediate cases specialist advice may be sought in respect of unfamiliar risks, such as those requiring some knowledge of ergonomics or more complex processes and techniques, and in these instances the departmental safety adviser will be able to help. The depth of risk assessment and time spent on it need not be great, it will depend upon the risks posed.

### **Areas of Action Priority Rules and Procedures**

1. Managers have the responsibility to ensure hazardous manual handling operations are avoided so far as is reasonably practicable.
2. Managers must make an assessment of any hazardous manual handling operations that cannot be avoided.
3. Managers must take appropriate steps to reduce the risk of injury arising out of manual handling operations as far as is reasonably practicable. Their effectiveness should be monitored and if the desired effect is not achieved, the situation should be reassessed.
4. Managers shall ensure that employees are provided with details of the risks and the preventative/protective measures identified by the assessments.
5. Managers must ensure that significant findings are recorded.
6. Managers must review, and if necessary, modify their manual handling assessments whenever there are developments that suggest they may no longer be valid or there has been a significant change in the matters to which the assessment relates.



7. Managers must monitor steps taken to avoid manual handling or reduce the risk of injury to check that they are having the desired effect in practice.
8. Managers must ensure that where a risk of injury as a result of manual handling is identified, employees are provided with specific information and training on manual handling risks and prevention.
9. Managers must take into account an individual's pregnancy, recent childbirth or health problem when undertaking a manual handling assessment. If a manager suspects that an individual's state of health might significantly increase the risk of injury from manual handling operations, advice should be sought from the Occupational Health Unit.
10. Where a manual handling risk has been identified and is not an obvious risk in the role, managers should ensure that Occupational Health has been informed so that this can be taken into consideration as part of pre-employment screening.
11. Employees must be advised to inform managers of any changes of circumstances that may affect their individual capability to undertake manual handling operations, including pregnancy and health problems.

## **Further information**

Manual handling assessment guidelines follow, it is essential that managers familiarise themselves with these or the system implemented within their department before undertaking a manual handling assessment.

## **Manual Handling Assessment Guidelines**

### **1. Responsibilities**

- 1.1 Line Managers and supervisors are responsible for ensuring that risk assessments are undertaken for all work activities in their area of responsibility. A meaningful assessment can only be based on a thorough practical understanding of the type of manual handling tasks to be performed, the loads to be handled and the working environment in which the tasks will be carried out.
- 1.2 There may be some areas of the assessment for which specialist advice is required, in these cases line managers and supervisors should contact their Departmental Safety Adviser.



- 1.3 There must be consultation with the staff involved in the manual handling activity and relevant safety representatives throughout the process, on the findings and any action plan. They can assist by highlighting difficulties such as the size and shape of the load, how often they are handled or the circumstances in which the handling operations are carried out.
- 1.4 Employees whilst at work are required to make full and proper use of any system of work and/or equipment provided for their use by management in order to reduce the risk of injury during manual handling operations.

## 2. Risk of Injury

2.1 Managers need to establish whether any manual handling operation is likely to create a risk of injury. The general risk assessment should identify where there is a risk to employees from manual handling operations. At this preliminary stage a judgement should be made as to the nature and likelihood of injury. It may not be necessary to assess in great detail if the operation can be avoided or the risk is clearly of a low order. Managers should also determine if any of the following are aspects of a manual handling operation as the risk of injury is likely to be increased:-

- (a) the load is held or manipulated at a distance from the trunk.
- (b) the handler(s) show poor posture.
- (c) the task involves twisting the trunk.
- (d) the task involves stooping.
- (e) the task involves reaching upwards.
- (f) the task involves excessive lifting or lowering distances.
- (g) the task involves excessive carrying distances.
- (h) the task involves excessive pushing or pulling of the load.
- (i) the task involves a risk of sudden movement of the load.
- (j) the task involves frequent or prolonged physical effort, or does not allow sufficient rest or recovery periods.
- (k) there is an imposed rate of work.
- (l) handling is done seated.
- (m) if two or more people are involved, vision or movement is impaired.
- (n) the load is heavy, bulky or unwieldy.
- (o) vision is impaired by the load.
- (p) the load is difficult to grasp.
- (q) the load is unstable, or its contents are likely to shift.
- (r) the load is sharp, hot or otherwise potentially damaging.



- (s) there are space constraints preventing good posture.
- (t) there are uneven, slippery or unstable floors.
- (u) there are variations in floor levels or work surfaces.
- (v) there are extremes of temperature or humidity.
- (w) there are ventilation problems or gusts of wind.
- (x) there are poor lighting conditions.
- (y) the task requires unusual strength, height, training, information etc.
- (z) the task puts at risk those who may be pregnant, have a disability or a health problem.

2.2 Well-kept records of accidents and ill health can identify accidents associated with manual handling and may yield evidence of links between manual handling and ill health, including injuries apparently unrelated to any specific accident or incident. Other possible indicators of manual handling problems include high levels of absenteeism or staff turnover. Any regular occurrence of back disorders or other relevant ailments should be investigated. However, such indicators are not a complete guide and should be used only to augment other risk assessment measures.

2.3 If there is any doubt whether there is a risk of injury resulting from manual handling operations, the Departmental Safety Adviser should be contacted for advice.

### **3. Elimination of Manual Handling**

3.1 Once a possibility of injury from manual handling operations has been identified, managers must first determine whether it is possible to avoid the manual handling operation in question. It is necessary to determine whether movement of the loads can be eliminated altogether; whether the operations are necessary or whether the desired result could be achieved in some entirely different way? Examples include repairing equipment in situ where it is safe to do so, or arranging for goods to be delivered to the point of use rather to a central point from which they will require subsequent relocation.

3.2 If load handling operations in some form cannot be eliminated entirely then further questions should be asked:



- (a) can the operations be automated?
- (b) can the operations be mechanised? (Although this can cause further risks that may need to be addressed.)

#### 4. Assessments

4.1 Where avoidance of a manual handling operation is not reasonably practicable a more detailed assessment needs to be carried out. Generic assessments are acceptable. Management should ensure the assessments adequately reflect the range of operations encountered.

4.2 When an assessment is undertaken it should cover the following:

- (a) The task.
- (b) The load.
- (c) The working environment.
- (d) Individual capability.

A pro-forma is provided at the end of this section.

4.3 The assessment must be kept up to date. It should be reviewed if new information comes to light or if there has been a change in the manual handling operation, where either of which could have affected the conclusion previously reached. The assessment should also be reviewed if a reportable injury occurs or a member of staff becomes pregnant.

4.4 The views of staff can be of particular value in identifying manual handling problems and practical solutions to them. Employees, safety representatives and safety committees should be encouraged to play a positive role in assessment process.

4.5 The assessment should identify in broad terms the problems likely to arise during the operations that can be foreseen and the measures that will be necessary to deal with them. These measures should include the provision of training to enable individual employees to cope effectively with the operations they are likely to undertake.



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## 5. Records

- 5.1 The significant findings of the assessment should be recorded and the record kept, readily accessible, as long as it remains relevant. This will be a minimum of three following completion of the activity. A longer period may be necessary if the activity involves the manual handling of service users/pupils.
- 5.2 The assessment need not be recorded if:
- (a) it could easily be repeated and explained at any time because it is simple and obvious; or
  - (b) the manual handling operations are quite straightforward, of low risk and the time taken to record them would be disproportionate.

## 6. Individual capability

- 6.1 Manual handling injuries are more often associated with the nature of the operation than with variations in individual capability. Therefore, any assessment that concentrates on individual capability at the expense of task or workplace design is likely to be misleading. However, it is an inescapable fact that the ability to carry out manual handling in safety does vary between individuals.

- 6.2 As a general rule the risk of injury should be regarded as unacceptable if the manual handling operations cannot be performed satisfactorily by most fit, healthy employees.





- 6.3 As part of an individual's pre-employment health screening, Occupational Health consider whether an individual is able to undertake manual handling and will advise accordingly. However this can only be based on the information provided by the individual. If manual handling is only part of the work to be undertaken and the Disability Discrimination Act applies, reasonable adjustments may need to be considered.
- 6.4 Allowances must be made for pregnancy where the manager could reasonably be expected to be aware of it, i.e. where it is visibly apparent or the employee has informed management that she is pregnant. Particular care should also be taken for individuals who may handle loads during the three months following a return to work after childbirth.
- 6.5 Allowance should also be made for any health problem of which the manager could reasonably be expected to be aware and which might have a bearing on the ability to carry out manual handling operations in safety. If there is good reason to suspect an individual's state of health might significantly increase the risk of injury from manual handling operations, advice should be sought from the Occupational Health Unit.
- 6.6 Where a manual handling risk has been identified and is not an obvious risk in the role, managers should ensure that Occupational Health has been informed so that they can take this into consideration as part of pre-employment screening.

## 7. Reducing the Risk of Injury

- 7.1 Once the assessment has identified a risk of injury, managers must take appropriate steps to reduce that risk of injury to the lowest level reasonably practicable. These should address the risk in a practical and effective manner. Their effectiveness should be monitored and if necessary the situation should be reappraised.
- 7.2 Employees and safety representatives should be involved in any redesign of the system of work and encouraged to report its effects. They should be encouraged in the development of good handling practice.
- 7.3 It will usually be convenient to continue with the same structured approach used during the assessment of the risk, considering in turn the task, the load, the working environment and individual capability.



## 7.4 Appropriate steps may include:

- Mechanical assistance.
- Improving task layout.
- Changing storage positions.
- Using the body more effectively.
- Improving the work routine.
- Avoiding the need to handle whilst seated.
- Introducing team handling.
- Reducing the load.
- Making the load smaller.
- Making the load easier to grasp.
- Making the load more stable.
- Removing space constraints.
- Improving the nature and condition of floors.
- Working on a single level.
- Improving lighting.
- Using personal protective clothing - this should be a last resort, when other controls do not provide adequate protection.

## 8. Information and Training

8.1 Managers should ensure that all employees involved in manual handling operations receive specific information and training on manual handling risks and prevention. Effective training is an effective part in reducing the risk of manual handling injury but is no substitute for a safe system of work. Employees should understand clearly how manual handling operations have been designed to ensure their safety. Training can be provided by Corporate Safety.

## Appendix 1

### 1. Manual Handling Risk Assessment Numerical Guidelines Filter

1.1 A detailed assessment of every manual handling operation would be a major task and involve wasted effort. Many manual handling

operations, for example lifting a cup of tea, will involve negligible handling risk. The HSE has developed a filter to screen out straightforward cases.

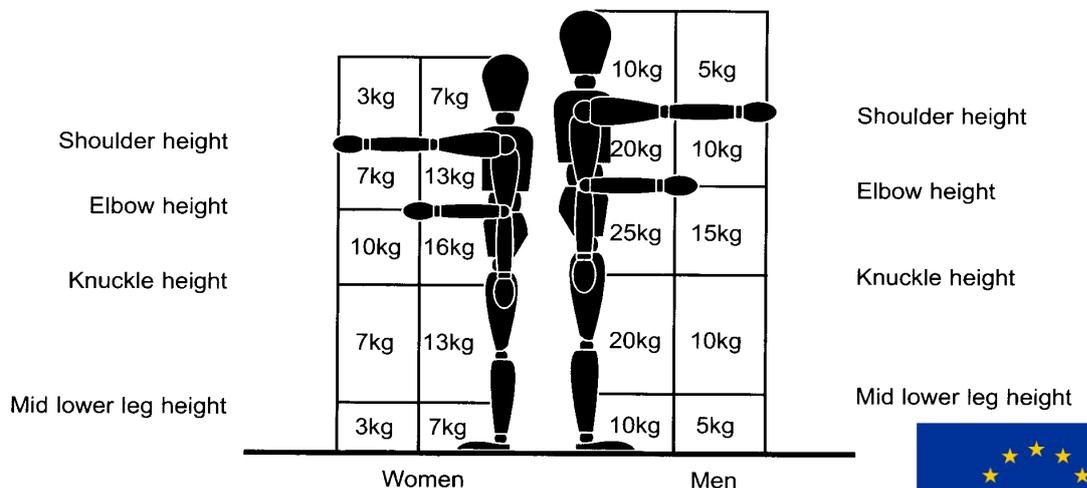


- 1.2 The numerical guidelines are intended to set out an approximate boundary within which the load is unlikely to create a risk of injury sufficient to warrant a detailed assessment.
- 1.3 The application of the guidelines will provide a reasonable level of protection to around 95% of working men and women. However, the guidelines should not be regarded as safe limits for lifting. There is no threshold below which manual handling operations may be regarded as 'safe'. Even operations lying within the boundary mapped out by the guidelines should be avoided or made less demanding wherever it is reasonably practicable to do so.
- 1.4 The use of the filter will only be worthwhile where the relevance of the guideline figures can be determined quickly. If this is not easily done, it is better to opt for the more detailed risk assessment.

## 2. Guidelines for lifting and lowering

2.1 These guidelines assume the load is easy to grasp with both hands and that the operation takes place in reasonable working conditions with the handler in a stable body position. They take into consideration the vertical and horizontal position of the hands as they move the load during the handling operation as well as the height and reach of the individual handler.

2.2 Guideline figures for lifting and lowering:



- 2.3 If the handler's hands enter more than one of the box zones during the operation, the smallest weight figures apply. Where lifting or lowering with the hands beyond the box zones is unavoidable, a more detailed assessment should always be made.
- 2.4 These figures are for relatively infrequent operations - up to thirty operations per hour. The figures will have to be reduced if the operation is repeated more often (by 30% when the operation repeated once or twice per minute, by 50% when the operation repeated five to eight times per minute and by 80% when the operation repeated more than twelve times per minute).
- 2.5 Even if the above conditions are satisfied, a more detailed risk assessment should be made when:
- The worker does not control the pace of the work.
  - Pauses for rest are inadequate or there is no change of activity which provides an opportunity to use different muscles.
  - The handler must support the load for any length of time.

### 3. Guidelines for carrying

- 3.1 Similar guideline figures apply to carrying operations where the load is held against the body and is carried no further than 10m without resting. If the load is carried over a longer distance without resting or the hands are below knuckle height then a more detailed risk assessment should be made.
- 3.2 Where the load can be carried securely on the shoulder without first having to be lifted, the figures can be applied to carrying distances in excess of 10m.

### 4. Guidelines for pushing and pulling

- 4.1 The guidelines assume the force is applied with the hands between knuckle and shoulder height. The guideline figure for starting or stopping the load is a force of about 25kg (i.e. 250 Newtons) for men and 16kg (160 Newtons) for women. The figure for keeping the load in motion is about 10kg (100 Newtons) for men and about 7kg (70 Newtons) for women.



4.2 There is no specific limit to the distance over which a load is pushed or pulled provided there are adequate opportunities for rest or recovery.

## 5. Guidelines for handling while seated

5.1. The basic figure is 5kg for men and 3kg for women. If handling is required away from the body, a more detailed risk assessment should be made.

## 6. Twisting

6.1 Twisting will increase the risk of injury. Where the task involves twisting and turning a detailed risk assessment should normally be made. However, if the operation is infrequent and there are no other posture problems, then this filter can be used. In such cases the figures should be reduced if the handler twists to the side during the operation. As a rough guide, the figures should be reduced by about 10% where the handler twists through 450 and by 20% where the handler twists through 900.

Remember - the use of these guidelines does not affect the duty to avoid or reduce the risk of injury where this is practicable. The figure should not be regarded as weight limits for safe lifting. They are an aid to determine if a detailed assessment is required.



**Manual Handling Operations Assessment Checklist**

**Section A – Preliminary**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. Job Title:   |   |
| 2. Operations covered by this assessment:   |   |
| 3. Location:  |   |
| 4. Personnel involved:  |   |
| 5. Date of assessment:  |   |
| 6. Do the operations involve a potential risk of injury?  | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>                                  |
| 7. Can the operations be avoided / mechanised / automated at reasonable cost?<br>(If 'In part' or 'No' go to Question 9. If 'Yes' implement but check result is satisfactory) | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> In part <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. Is a detailed assessment needed?<br>(i.e. Are there factors beyond the limits of the guidelines?)  | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>                                  |
| 9. Factors beyond limits of the guidelines?   |   |

If the answer to question 8 is 'Yes', complete a detailed assessment (See over).

**Section B**

The overall assessment of risk is:

**Low**    
 **Medium**    
 **High**

## Section C

| Remedial Action Required, in order of priority | Date for action |
|--|-----------------|
| 1.   |                 |
| 2.   |                 |
| 3.   |                 |
| 4.   |                 |
| 5.   |                 |

**Assessor's name(s):**

**Signature(s):**

**Date for reassessment:**

## Manual Handling Operations Detailed Assessment Form

| Questions to consider                      | If yes, tick risk level |             |                  | Problems occurring from the task | Possible remedial action |
|--|-------------------------|-------------|------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
|  | L<br>o<br>w             | M<br>e<br>d | H<br>i<br>g<br>h |                                  |                          |
| <b>The tasks - do they involve:</b>        |                         |             |                  |                                  |                          |
| Holding loads away from trunk?             |                         |             |                  |                                  |                          |
| Twisting?                                  |                         |             |                  |                                  |                          |
| Stooping?                                  |                         |             |                  |                                  |                          |
| Reaching upwards?                          |                         |             |                  |                                  |                          |
| Large vertical movements?                  |                         |             |                  |                                  |                          |
| Long carrying distances?                   |                         |             |                  |                                  |                          |
| Strenuous pushing or pulling?              |                         |             |                  |                                  |                          |
| Unpredictable load movement?               |                         |             |                  |                                  |                          |
| Repetitive handling?                       |                         |             |                  |                                  |                          |
| Insufficient rest or recovery?             |                         |             |                  |                                  |                          |
| An imposed workrate?                       |                         |             |                  |                                  |                          |
| <b>The loads - are they:</b>               |                         |             |                  |                                  |                          |
| Heavy?                                     |                         |             |                  |                                  |                          |
| Bulky/unwieldy?                            |                         |             |                  |                                  |                          |
| Difficult to grasp?                        |                         |             |                  |                                  |                          |
| Unstable/unpredictable?                    |                         |             |                  |                                  |                          |
| Intrinsically harmful (e.g. sharp or hot?) |                         |             |                  |                                  |                          |
| <b>The environment – are there:</b>        |                         |             |                  |                                  |                          |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Constraints on posture?                      |  |  |  |  |  |
| Poor floors?                                 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Variations in levels?                        |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hot/cold/humid conditions?                   |  |  |  |  |  |
| Strong air movements?                        |  |  |  |  |  |
| Poor lighting conditions?                    |  |  |  |  |  |
| <b>Individual capability – does the job:</b> |  |  |  |  |  |
| Require unusual capability?                  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hazard those with a health problem?          |  |  |  |  |  |
| Hazard those who are pregnant?               |  |  |  |  |  |
| Call for special training?                   |  |  |  |  |  |